

## Handout 6-1: Incident Complexity

“Incident complexity” is the combination of involved factors that affect the probability of control of an incident. Many factors determine the complexity of an incident, including, but not limited to, area involved, threat to life and property, political sensitivity, organizational complexity, jurisdictional boundaries, values at risk, weather, strategy and tactics, and agency policy.

Incident complexity is considered when making incident management level, staffing, and safety decisions.

Various analysis tools have been developed to assist consideration of important factors involved in incident complexity. Listed below are some factors that may be considered in analyzing incident complexity:

- Size and duration of the incident or event
- Resource requirements
  - Number of resources involved/ required
  - Type and availability of resources required
- Impacts to life, property, environment, and the economy (Community Lifelines)
- Community and responder safety
- Potential hazardous materials
- Weather and other environmental influences
- Likelihood of cascading events
- Potential crime scene (including terrorism)
- Political sensitivity, external influences, community concerns and media relations
- Jurisdictional boundaries in affected area